

# Religious Conference

Between a

Minister and Parishioner :

Concerning the Practice of Our

*Orthodox Church of England*

I N

BAPTIZING INFANTS,

A N D

Pouring Water on their Faces, or Sprinkling them;  
and in Confirming them by the Bishop when they  
come of Age to give an Account of their Faith.

Proving all three lawful by the Authority of the Holy  
Scriptures.

[By Charles Leslie]

Ezech. 3. 17. *Son of Man; I have made thee a Watchman unto the  
House of Israel; therefore hear the Word at my Mouth, and give  
them warning from me.*

L O N D O N:

Printed for A. and J. Churchill, and sold by John Pearce Bookseller in  
St. Pauls Church-yard, 1696.

# Religious Controversies

Between a  
Minister and Parishioner:

Of the Church of England

## BAPTIZING INFANTS

Containing  
a Statement of the Reasons  
for the Practice of Baptizing  
Infants, as it is now  
performed in the Church  
of England, and  
a Defence of the same  
against the Objections  
of the Dissenters.



Printed for A. and J. Churchill, and sold by John Roberts Bookseller in  
Fleet Street, London.

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# Religious Conference

Between a

Minister and Parishioner, &c.

*Parishioner.* **G**OODmorrow to you Sir, I wish you Health of Body, which, as I remember, you heretofore often wanted.

*Minister.* The God of Heaven bleſs you Sir, and give you Health of Soul, and grant you may never want that.

*P.* This ſpiritual Health is ſomewhat impair'd ſince your Departure from us.

*M.* I am heartily ſorry for that, and wiſh I cou'd reſtore it; but hope you have ſo much Charity for me, as to believe I wou'd gladly have officiated ſtill among you if I cou'd have done it without ſinning againſt my own Conſcience.

*P.* You have ſtudied that Point better than I, and if you are ſatisfied, I have no reaſon to object againſt it.

*M.* I thank God I am eaſie and quiet in my own Mind, and that is a continual Feaſt.

*P.* I believe ſo by your Countenance, becauſe you look better than ever; but I have often wiſh'd my ſelf and this Pariſh under your Miniſtry again; it might have been a means under God to have kept ſome of us from falling from the Church into divers Errors, and particularly that of oppoſing Infant Baptiſm.

*M.* I am mightily concern'd to hear ſuch Oppoſers of truth do increaſe in theſe Parts.

*P.* So am I to ſee it, and to tell you that one of your Flock, who was a conſtant Attendant on your publick Prayers, Preaching, and Holy Sacrament, has been lately dipt by them; and others I fear are like to follow.

A 2

*M.* This

*M.* This grieves my very Soul, the good God put a Stop to this spreading Contagion.

*P.* And pray Sir lend your helping Hand to cure it.

*M.* I shall readily and freely do it by satisfying your Doubts, or answering any puzzling Questions you shall propose about it.

*P.* I kindly thank you Sir, and without any more ado shall begin with my first Question, which is to inform me what Baptism is? Because the Stress of this Controversie lies in understanding the Meaning and Signification of it.

*M.* The Word [*Baptize*] is us'd in Scripture to signifie sometimes the dipping the whole Body in Water, sometimes the wetting, washing, or sprinkling some Part thereof with Water.

*P.* How do you prove this latter Signification of the Word [*Baptism*?]

*M.* From four several Places of Scripture, as *Luke* 11. 38. where 'tis said in the Greek, our Saviour was not baptiz'd, because he had not wash'd his Hands before Dinner, and the Pharisee marvelled at it, that he himself ( not his Hands ) was not baptiz'd; and *Mar.* 10. 39. where our Lord calls his Sufferings on the Cross a Baptism, because he was wet and sprinkled with the Blood and Water which issued out of his wounded Heart; and *Act.* 1. 5. where the Disciples are promised to be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many Days hence, because the Holy Ghost was shortly to be shed or poured forth on the Disciples Heads, and into their Hearts, somewhat after the manner of our pouring forth Water, and sprinkling in Baptism, which was prophecy'd by *Joel*, *cap.* 2. 28, 29. and came to pass on the Day of Pentecost, *Act.* 2. 17, 33. and *1 Cor.* 10. 2. where *St. Paul* says the *Israelites* in their Passage from *Egypt* to *Caanan* were all baptized in the Cloud, because they were all sprinkled with the Rain which fell from it; as is further evident from *Psal.* 77. 17. the Clouds poured out Water, *i. e.* on the Children of *Israel* as they marched thro' the Red Sea, to which the foregoing and following Verses of that Psalm prove that it must have Reference.

*P.* May Baptism then be administred by sprinkling or pouring Water on the Face of the baptized Person as well as by dipping him?

*M.* Yes



*M.* Yes it may for the Reasons before expressed, because Christ who was wet and sprinkled with Blood and Water in some Part of his Body on the Cross, and his Apostles, who had the Holy Ghost poured forth, and as it were sprinkled upon them, and the *Israelites* who in their Passage thro' the Red Sea, were sprinkled only with Water (for all that way they walked on dry Ground, *Exod.* 14. 22.) these are all nevertheless said to be baptized.

*P.* But was not Christ and the Eunuch dipt under Water when they were baptized, because they both went down into the Water, and came up out of it?

*M.* It does not necessarily follow from those Expressions that the Baptism of either was by dipping, since *John Baptist* and *Philip* went down into the Water, and came up out of it, as well as Christ and the Eunuch, and yet none do thence infer the two former were dipt.

*P.* But they urge farther, and I have often heard it from them, that Place of *Joh. 3. 23.* *John* was baptizing in *Enon* near *Salim*, for there was much water there; whence they conclude he dipt his Profelytes, or else why is that reason given there? Why did he repair to a River for Baptism?

*M.* The reason why *John* baptized in *Enon* as well as *Jordan* might be, and in all Probability was, because of the great Multitudes that resorted to him for Baptism, *Jerusalem*, and all *Judea*, and all the Region round about *Jordan*, *Mat. 3. 5.* and to be continually drawing and carrying Water for the baptizing so many thousand People wou'd have been an endless Work, and therefore a River was the most convenient Place for *John's* Baptism, there being then too no Baptisteries in Churches erected and allowed for that purpose; and the saying there was much Water there, does no more prove that *John* dipt his Disciples, than the Eunuchs saying to *Philip*, see here is Water, what does hinder me to be baptized? *Act. 8. 36.* does prove, that he was only sprinkled; because the Eunuch makes Water, and not the Muchness or Littleness of it to be the Reason why *Philip* shou'd baptize him there; *2ly.* If *John* had dipt his Profelytes, this is no Proof that we must do so too, because his Baptism, if it was the same for Substance with Christ's, yet was administered in a different manner, and not in that

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storming  
of Anti-  
christ, pag.  
13. part. 2.

Form of Words Christ's was, not in the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and for this we have the Confession of \* one of their own Party, that *John* did not baptize in the Name of the Holy Trinity as Christ did, which he proves from *Act. 2. 3, 4, 5.* where those twelve Disciples, because they had not been baptized in the Name of the Holy Ghost, altho' baptiz'd before into *John's* Baptism, were all baptiz'd again by *St. Paul*; and if *John's* Baptism differ'd from ours in some Circumstances, why may not ours differ from his in this one of sprinkling, and we lawfully use it, tho' *John* did dipping, especially since there is nothing in Christ's Command which requires us to observe the one more than the other, but he leaves the Minister at liberty (as our Church does) either to dip or sprinkle according to the Strength or Weakness of the Party that is to be baptized; and either way if he does it with Water, and in the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, he does administer true Christian Baptism.

*P.* I think this a sufficient Answer to that Objection from *John*, and wonder these Men insist so much upon dipping in Baptism, as to make the Ordinance void without it, when they can never prove this to be essential to Baptism from any Place of Scripture, but only by conjectural Consequences and Deductions from it.

*M.* I do not wonder at this at all, since none are more confident, than those that are most ignorant; as deep Rivers run silently on, but shallow Streams make a Noise; and thus Mountebanks will undertake Cures, which the ablest Physicians look on as desperate; but they seldom stay long in a Place, and more seldom cure People of any Disease but their Folly.

*P.* But I hope I shall have more Wit than to be cheated by Mountebanks in Physick, and more Grace than to be deceiv'd by Mountebanks in Religion.

*M.* Pray take care of both, but more especially the latter, since to try Practices on the Soul is far more dangerous than to tamper with the Body.

*P.* I thank you for your good Advice, and by God's Help shall be careful to follow it: But to return to our former Discourse, pray Sir, who are the proper Subjects of Baptism, which you have prov'd may be administered by sprinkling or dipping? *M.*

*M.* Not only all Believers, but also all their Children.

*P.* How do you prove that Believers Children may lawfully be baptiz'd?

*M.* From several Texts of Scripture, which by good and undeniable Consequence imply so much.

*P.* Pray Sir name some of those Texts that I may have them in readiness to defend our Church's Practice in baptizing Infants.

*M.* I shall; the first is a Place already quoted to prove the Lawfulness of sprinkling, 1 Cor. 10. 2. where the Apostle says the *Israelites* were all baptiz'd into *Moses* in the Cloud and in the Sea, which imports ( as all Expositors will allow, even those that oppose the Consequence we draw from it ) that the Jews Passage thro' the Red Sea was a \* Type of our Christian Baptism; and if so it was in the Type, that Men, Women, and Children passed thro' the red Sea, it ought to be so in the thing typifi'd, and then the Children of believing Parents as well as they themselves, may and ought to be baptiz'd.

Mr. Kersch's  
Gold re-  
fin'd, p. 62.

*P.* But did not the Jews Cattle and many Unbelievers pass thro' the Red Sea with them? And were they baptiz'd too? This seems absurd.

*M.* And so does your Question; the Scripture being silent, and saying nothing about Cattle and Unbelievers which went with *Israel* thro' the Red Sea; and if both of them did, how cou'd they be baptized into *Moses*, i. e. into his Doctrine and Law, which the Cattle cou'd not, and the Unbelievers wou'd not understand and obey? and therefore the mixt Multitude spoken of *Ex. 12. 38.* who went up from *Egypt* were all the *Jewish* Profelytes, as well as the *Jews* themselves, their Wives, and Children, comprehended under the general Name of Fathers in the former Verse, 1 Cor. 10. 1. These were the [ *All* ] that were baptized unto *Moses* in the Cloud and in the Sea.

*P.* Where is your next Scripture Proof?

*M.* It is *Col. 2. 11, 12* where the same Apostle calls Baptism a Circumcision made without Hands, and says the *Colossians* were circumcised by it, which implies that Circumcision comes in the room of Baptism, as our Saviour's calling the Lord's Supper the Passover is an Argument it was instituted instead thereof, *Luk. 22.*

*P.* But

P. But here they object that if Baptism comes in the room of Circumcision, then Males must be only baptized, as Males of old were only circumcised.

M. To this I answer, 1. That Baptism does not succeed Circumcision as the Antitype does the Type, or the Substance does the Shadow; but as one positive Institution succeeds another, and both seal the same spiritual Mercies, that to the Jews, and this to the Christians; and therefore if Baptism is administered to other Subjects, *viz.* Females, who are more capable thereof than they were of Circumcision, this is no Argument that the one does not come in the room of the other, but rather that God's Mercies are more enlarged to us than to them, as the Seal thereof which is Baptism, is extended and applied farther than their Circumcision was; 2. I say that the Jewish Females were virtually circumcis'd in the Males, and for that reason the whole Jewish Church and Nation are call'd in Scripture by the Name of Circumcision, *Act. 10. 45. cap. 11. 2. Gal. 2. 9. and Phil. 3. 3.*

P. But they have a Salvo for this, that the Jewish People are call'd the Circumcision from the greater part who were circumcis'd, as the Cattle of Egypt are said to have dy'd, *Ex. 9. 6.* and yet there was Cattle left, *ver. 19, 25.*

M. But this will not serve the turn; for how does it appear that the Jews Males were more in Number than their Females? Their Number might be equal, or they might have more Women than Men for any thing can be prov'd to the contrary; but to put this matter out of doubt, that the Jews were not call'd the Circumcision from the greater or better Part of them that were circumcis'd, is plain from *Ex. 12. 48.* where no uncircumcis'd Person was to eat of the Passover; and yet the Jewish Women did constantly partake thereof, and were never reprov'd by Moses or any of the Prophets for it; and therefore in God's Esteem the Jewish Women must be virtually circumcised in the Men, or else they could not have been admitted to the Lord's Passover.

P. This is a convincing Argument, and proves that Males and Females among the Jews in respect of the Covenant of Circumcision were (like Man and Wife) but one Flesh; and I cannot imagine what they will say to this; but they have something to off-



fer from that place of *St. Paul* for Dipping, that he calls our Spiritual Circumcision a *being buried with Christ in Baptism*, which they say, is an Argument against Sprinkling, and for Dipping.

*M.* To this I Answer, 1. This passage cannot be taken according to the Letter, that the *Colossians* were cover'd all over with Water in Baptism, as Christ was cover'd with Earth at his Burial, who had no Earth at all upon him, being laid in a Sepulchre of hewn Stone; and they must have continued Three Days and Nights under Water, to make the resemblance to Christ's Burial compleat, and then they would have been Bury'd indeed. 2. In Burying a Corps, we are not wont to Dip them into the Earth, which will not yield to them as Water does; but to sprinkle Earth upon it. 3. This Phrase must be taken Mystically as our Church expounds it, that as Christ Died and Rose again for us, so shou'd we who are Baptized Dye from Sin, and Rise again unto Righteousness.

*P.* Have you any more places of Scripture to produce?

*M.* Yes, Three more, which you shall have in order, *Mat* 19. 14. where our Lord says, of little Children, whom *St. Luke* calls Infants, *Cap.* 18. 15. who were brought unto him for his Blessing and Prayers, [*of such is the Kingdom of Heaven*] and then certainly we cannot deny Baptism to those Children to whom God will not deny Heaven.

*P.* But at this rate of arguing you must give them the Lord's Supper too, as they did generally in the Church about a Thousand Years ago.

*M.* But there is not the same Reason for administering the one, as there is the other Ordinance to Children: 1. Because in that Command our Lord gives about Baptism, *John* 3. 5. the Word made use of to signify the subjects thereof, may be as well extended to Infants as to grown Persons; 'tis except [one] any one, whether he be Man or Woman or Child, be Born of Water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God; but in the Command *St. Paul* gives about the Lord's Supper, he says, *Let a Man examine himself, and so let him Eat of that Bread, and Drink of that Cup, 1 Cor.* 11. 28. *Let a Man, &c.* the word signifies a Man of Understanding, that can *examine himself, and*



*discern the Lord's Body*; so that Infants may be baptiz'd pursuant to the former Command, but they may not be permitted to Communicate pursuant to the latter.

P. But these Men will not understand that place of *John* to be spoken of our Christian Baptism.

M. They may understand things as they please, and as their Interest leads them; but it is plain, the most Ancient and best Expositors have so understood the place, and so it must be understood, or else it will be hard for them to prove we must Baptize with Water, there being no mention of Water in Christ's Commission, or rather enlargement of it to his Disciples *to Baptize all Nations*, Mat. 28. 19. And therefore I wonder at the Confidence of \* one of them, who says, this last is the only place where Water-baptism is mention'd, when 'tis certain, it is not there mention'd at all; the words are, *Go ye therefore, and Teach all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*; 'tis not there said, Baptize them with Water any more than its said, Baptize Infants; and if Water had been expressed, to what purpose does that Author muster up eight Arguments, and spend so many Pages to prove Water must be impli'd and meant in Christ's Commission, if it was mention'd there?

\* Mr. K.  
Gold re-  
fin'd, p. 6.

P. 'Tis strange a Man shou'd take so much pains to prove Water must be intended in such a place of Scripture, if it was there expressed?

M. 'Tis no stranger than true, but he is loath such a needful thing as Water shou'd be omitted in Christ's Commission to Baptize, and be only imply'd, lest on the same account the baptizing of Infants shou'd be also imply'd in it.

P. That may be the reason why he is so presumptuous to say Water-baptism is mention'd, Mat. 28. 18. tho' he tells an untruth in saying it; but have you any other Reason why Children tho' they may be Baptiz'd, may not receive the Lord's Supper?

M. Yes, because Baptism is an Initiating Sacrament, and so (like Milk) proper only for Babes in Christ; but the Lord's Supper is a strengthening and confirming Sacrament, and so (like strong-

stronger Meat) proper for such as are grown to be perfect Men in Christ Jesus.

P. But Christ does not say, of these Children, but of such as these, is the Kingdom of Heaven.

M. But if Men shall enter into Heaven for being like Children, Children who are set for Mens Pattern, cannot be excluded from it; and if Children have a Right to the Heavenly Inheritance, they cannot in Justice be deny'd Baptism, which is as it were God's Signing and Sealing the Deed by which it is convey'd.

P. This seems unreasonable; but what is your other Proof?

M. It is, 1 Cor. 7. 14. *Else were your Children unclean, but now are they holy*: Where the Apostle in all likelihood intends a real or fœderal, and not a Matrimonial Holiness, i. e. only a Legitimacy to be in Believers Children; otherwise there cou'd be no Lawful Marriages among Heathens, nor their Children lawfully begotten, contrary to *Heb. 13. 4. Marriage is honourable in all, &c.* and this reason of our Exposition the Opposers thereof do well to omit, because I doubt they are not able to Answer it.

P. But if fœderal Holiness be here meant, then the Unbelieving Wife may lay a claim to Baptism as well as the Children, on the account of her Husband's Faith.

M. No, there is a double difference in the Case. 1. Because there is not the same reason a Believer's Unbelieving Wife shou'd be Covenantly Holy, as that his Children shou'd be so; Almighty God having engag'd himself in Covenant to such Children, which he has not done to such a Wife; the Tenor of which Covenant, runs thus, *Gen. 17. 7. I will establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee in their Generations, for an everlasting Covenant; to be a God to thee and to thy Seed after thee.* And this Covenant which God made with *Abraham*, is still in Force, and made with the Believing *Gentiles* and their Children, by Virtue of which, a Covenant relation redounds to the Children of a Believing Father, but not of the Unbelieving Mother; the Covenant is establish'd with Believers and their Seed; and not with their Wives that are Idolaters; and so *St. Peter* expounds this Covenant, *Acts 2. 39. The promise is to you, and to your Children;*

there is no mention in either place of Unbelieving Wives, neither are they included in the Covenant of Grace, as their Believing Husbands and Children are; as for instance, when *Solomon* Marry'd *Pharaoh's* Daughter, she continuing a *Heathen* still, had no benefit of the *Abrahamic* Covenant, as her Husband and Children (if he begat any by her) had; they were both within the Covenant, tho' she was out of it: In like manner is it with a Believing Christian Husband, he and his Children are Covenantly Holy, when his Unbelieving Wife is not so, but only Civilly Holy. 2. The Wife is able, and therefore ought to make Profession of her Faith, before she is Baptiz'd; the Children are not able to Profess their Faith, and therefore may be Baptiz'd without it: And this distinction they must allow, because they have made it themselves in respect of Christ's Satisfaction, which \*they say, is but one, though there is a twofold way of applying it. 1. Through believing in those that are capable of believing. 2. Without believing is this Satisfaction apply'd to dying Infants: And therefore they have no more reason to say we make two Baptisms, than we have to say, they make two Satisfaction of Christ; one for grown Persons through Faith, and another for Infants without Faith. And if Christ's Satisfaction is one, so is our Baptism one, notwithstanding this twofold way of applying it; but were this Interpretation of ours of *Fœderal* as false as I have prov'd theirs of *Matrimonial* Holiness to be, there is a third more probable than both; that by Sanctify'd *St. Paul* means Baptiz'd; that the Unbelieving Wife by the Conversation and importunity of the Believing Husband has been Sanctify'd, i. e. Baptiz'd, the effect, which is Sanctification, being here put (as also in several of the Ancient Fathers) for Baptism, which is the instrumental cause of it; and if this be the Apostle's sense, (as 'tis more likely than theirs) then Children were Baptiz'd in *St. Paul's* time, and his saying, they were *Holy*, imports as much.

*P.* But this Interpretation supposes that Baptism washes away Original Sin; and how can Water do that? How can it cleanse the Soul in a Physical manner?

*M.* 'Tis not the Water, but the Spirit of God which co-operates with it, that produces Sanctification in the Childs Soul; and

\*Mr. Blackwood's  
storming  
of Anti-  
christ, pag.  
11. part. 2.

and 'tis by vertue of Christ's Institution that Baptism is a Converting, as the Lord's Supper is a Strengthening Ordinance ; and the operation of Grace in both is not perform'd in a Natural, but Supernatural and Spiritual manner, and by vertue of Christ's Institution.

P. Then all Believers Children are Regenerated in Baptism, which cannot be, because some prove wicked afterwards, unless you hold a falling from Grace.

M. 1. If we hold this, they have not yet prov'd it to be an Error, and if they cou'd, some of their own party wou'd be found to be Erroneous. 2. There is no need of holding it, because such Believers Children as prove wicked, may repent afterwards in their Lifetime, or at the Hour of their Death ; and that they do not repent is more than any can certainly tell, and therefore we shou'd be so Charitable as to think and hope the best.

P. Some indeed say (as you do) that Regeneration is conferr'd in Baptism, and exerts it self afterwards in Conversion ; but how so active a Principle as Spiritual Life, shou'd lye dead and a-sleep so long, even many Years which intervene betwixt Baptism and Conversion, is not easily conceivable.

M. This is as easie to be conceiv'd, as that *David* after his Conversion shou'd fall into those foul Sins of Adultery and Murder, and wallow a considerable time (a Year or two at least, as some conjecture) in them ; and let any of these Men reconcile *David's* foul Sins and continuance in them, with his former Conversion, and I will undertake to reconcile the after-wickedness of Children with their Regeneration in Baptism.

P. But if Baptism be a Regenerating Ordinance, What becomes of those Children that die without it ? Must they be all Damn'd that die before they are Baptiz'd ?

M. 1. If they should be all damn'd, What have these Men to answer for, that have been the cause of so many Thousand Childrens damnation ? It must needs make their Hell seven times hotter to meet their Unbaptiz'd Children there, whom they might have kept from coming into that place of Torments ; But 2. Our Church has determin'd nothing about this matter, leaving us (as the Scripture does) in the dark concerning it,  
and



and not binding Almighty God to those means, to which he has bound us; and all that can be gathered from the Scriptures and our Church's doctrine about this nice point is, that Baptism is the only ordinary Means of our childrens Salvation; and if any of them through their Parents negligence and contempt of that Ordinance should die without it, because it is not the Childrens fault, thro the extraordinary Grace of God they may be sav'd, when the Parents, who saw the danger of their Souls, and would have no pity, through the just Judgment of God may be damn'd;

*P.* But to avoid this dreadful Consequence of the damnation of themselves or Children, \* they say Infants are sav'd by the presentment of the Satisfaction of Christ to God's Justice for Original Sin, and that without believing, this Satisfaction is apply'd to dying Infants, whether they be born of Turks or Christians.

\*Mr. Blackwood  
storming  
of Anti-  
christ,  
p. 11. and  
53.

*M.* But this Answer does not seem sufficient upon a double account. 1. Because many of their Infants live to commit actual Sin, and then die unbaptized, and the bare pardon of their Original Sin is not enough to save such; their Actual Sins must be forgiven too, or else they will be damn'd. 2. Because the presentment of Christ's Satisfaction to God's Justice for Original Sin amounts to no more than a Pardon of it, which may be granted Children without admitting them to the Joys of Heaven, which cannot be obtain'd without Christs imputed, or their own inherent Righteousness; as a Rebel may be pardon'd his Treason, and so not suffer the Sentence of Death, which is an Act of Grace in the Prince; but yet to prefer this pardon'd Rebel to a place at Court, it must proceed from some extraordinary merit, or a farther Act of Grace to do this; and therefore the *Pelagians*, who were a Sect that denied Original Sin, nevertheless were for Baptizing their Children, that they might be born again, and so enter into the Kingdom of God. 3. But if this is sufficient to obtain Heaven for Infants, the presentment of the Satisfaction of Christ to Gods Justice for Original Sin, Why is not the same sufficient to qualifie them to be Baptized? In short, let these Men assign what reason they will for Infants Salvation (and some they must, or declare their opinion to be

unreason-



unreasonable) and I will undertake to prove the same will conclude more forceably for Infants Baptism. Indeed we both agree that Infants may be sav'd ; they say, without Baptism by Christ's Satisfaction ; we say, certainly with Baptism, which is the application of that Satisfaction ; their Opinion is uncertain and hazardous, ours sure and certain by God's Word, *John 3. 5.* and *Tit. 3. 5.* and therefore to Baptize our Children is the safest and surest way ; and not to Baptize them, is to expose them to infinite and apparent danger, which no Parents that love their Children and their own Souls will venture to do.

P. I am glad you have cleared this Point so well, I hope it will make all Parents consider the dreadful hazard they run in neglecting their Childrens Baptism ; but there is one Scripture proof more which you promised, wanting.

M. It is in *Acts 2. 39.* where St. Peter declares that the Promise, *i. e.* of Remission of Sins and Gift of the Holy Ghost belongs to the Believing *Gentiles* and their Children, as well as to the *Jews* and theirs ; and that they both and their Children stood upon equal Terms in respect of the Covenant of Grace.

P. But may not this Promise be understood with reference to that Curse the *Jews* imprecated on their Childrens head when they Crucified Christ, *His Blood be on us and our Children, Mat. 27. 25.* that they and their Children should be freed from that Curse, in case they did live to repent, and be Baptized ?

M. No, The Text cannot be so Interpreted ; because if the Curse was imprecated, and fell on their Children according to the *Jews* imprecation ; why should not this Promise, if it were a freedom from that Curse, exempt their Children from it, altho they might not live actually to repent of it ? And since a great many of them in all probability did not live so long, 'twas but poor comfort to tell the *Jews* their Children should be pardoned and saved on condition they repented, which was impossible for them to perform ; and for this Reason, and because it was made to the *Gentiles* too, who are not charg'd by St. Peter to be guilty of Christ's Blood as the *Jews* were, *Acts 2. 23.* this Promise, *ver. 39.* cannot be particular to the *Jews* for their Sin of

of Blood-guiltiness, but must be general and extend to all theirs and the *Gentiles* Actual Sins, and the Original Sin of both their Children; and if this Promise belong to both their Children, there is no other ordinary means for them to receive the benefit of it but by Baptism.

P. But does not the Clause in the conclusion limit the Promise to grown Believers? [*even as many as the Lord our God shall call*]

M. No, That is only another Phrase to express the *Gentiles* by, and a further Explication of the former [*All that are afar off*] and the purport of both is, that the Promise is the same to the converted *Gentiles* as to the converted *Jews*, and since the Children of the *Jews* are expressed to have a Right in this Promise, the Children of the *Gentiles* must be imply'd to have the same Right in it.

P. Have they not some other Answers to these Five Texts of Scripture?

M. Yes, But they are evasive ones, and I have considered them, and reply'd to them in a set Discourse, of which this is but an Abridgment.

P. I should be glad to see this; but in the mean time must observe, that they will tell you all your five Scripture Proofs come short of Proving your Point, because none of them expressly require us to Baptize our Children.

M. I thought they would allow of a good consequence from these or any other Texts of Scripture for Infant Baptism; if they do not, what have they to say for admitting Women to the Lords Supper, there being no express Command for it?

P. Here I confess they are hard put to it, and after all their turnings and windings are not able to produce one such Precept, or so much as one Example for this practice; but are forced to fly to deductions and consequences to prove it.

M. This shews these Men to be partial; they can easily espy the lawfulness of Womens receiving the Lords Supper in Scripture; but they cannot, or rather will not see the lawfulness of Childrens Receiving Baptism; which is as visible there as the other.

P. But

*P.* But they produce three or four passages out of the *Acts* of the Apostles, and *S. Paul's Epistles* to prove that Women believed and were Baptized; and that they that were Baptized Assembled together and brake bread.

*M.* But how do they prove that this breaking of Bread must be the Lords Supper; and not the First Christians ordinary Meals, since in the same Chapter 'tis call'd a breaking of Bread from House to House? How do they likewise prove that those that were Baptiz'd and brake Bread, must needs be all the Believers that were then in the World; and if all were not present (as it is highly improbable so many Thousands shou'd receive the Lord's Supper together in one House) why might not those that were absent be the Women? *Alas! they cannot infer a right to the Ordinance from what grounds they please; they must produce some plain Command or Example for Womens Communicating, or they say nothing.* This is certain, my former Texts of Scripture as plainly prove Infant Baptism, as any Text they can bring, does that Women ought to receive the Lord's Supper; and I wish they would let the Controversie rest here, and I will undertake to prove, as clearly the one, as they are able to do the other.

*P.* But are you against Womens receiving the Lord's Supper?

*M.* No, God forbid; you know I have formerly Preach'd the contrary, and pressed and persuaded Women as well as Men to partake of that great Ordinance; and I am still, and hope shall ever be of the same Mind. But I urge this to prove that we have not better Grounds from Scripture to admit Women to the Lord's Table, than we have to admit Believers Children to Baptism.

*P.* I apprehend you, Sir, that there is good Grounds from Scripture for both; but if there is no express Command or Example for the Baptism of Infants, it must be unlawful, for that nothing ought to be done in the Worship of God, but what has one or the other to Warrant it.

*M.* But how do they prove this?

*P.* They produce *Jer. 7. 31.* *And they have built the high Places of Tophet, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their Daughters in the fire, which I Commanded them not; neither came it into my Heart.* And several other places.

*M.* But this and the like Scriptures mention such things only as God had expressly forbidden; and the Phrase [*I commanded them not*] imports as much, and is all one, as if the Prophet had said [*I forbade them*] to do this. But what is the Idolatry here spoken of, *viz.* the Jews sacrificing their Sons and their Daughters to Devils. What is this to Infant Baptism? which is an Offering our Sons and our Daughters to Christ: Is the one as Unlawful and great a Wickedness as the other? Let them prove this; and the Controversie is at an end; but let them *not think to fetch their Arguments from the Old Testament, to overthrow a New-Testament Ordinance*; if they do, to speak in their own Language, is not this a meer twisting Vanity, and nought but a piece of foolery and deceit to darken Counsel with words without knowledge? Job 38. 2. I think this to be a more true and safe Rule than theirs; that as nothing is our Duty, but what God has expressly, or by good consequence Commanded; so nothing is a Sin, but what God has expressly or by good consequence forbidden, according to that plain passage in Job. 3. 4. *Sin is the transgression of the Law*; and St. Paul's inference from it, *where there is no Law, there is no transgression*, Rom. 4. 15. Besides, if that Text of Jeremy, or any other of the like nature shou'd condemn our Practice in Baptizing Infants, they do as much condemn their Practice in admitting Women to the Lord's Supper, which is alike destitute of any express Scripture Command or Example to warrant it, and then according to their own way of arguing, it must be sinful.

*P.* But if you cou'd produce some Command or Example for Baptizing Children, you wou'd soon convince these Men, and they would readily do it.

*M.* I much doubt this, whether they would Baptize their Children, if there were never so plain a Command or Example, in Scripture for it.

*P.* This looks a little Uncharitable; but what reason have you to think this of them?

*M.* Because altho we tell them the Chapter and Verse where singing Psalms is required, and where there are Examples of Christ and his Apostles, who not only Injoin'd it others, but also practis'd it themselves, yet the far greater number of them in

this



this Kingdom never sing Psalms or Hymns at all; and 'tis no Uncharitableness to think, that those who make bold in disobeying one Scripture Command, back'd with Examples too, wou'd not make bold in disobeying another.

P. But I am told, they refuse to sing Psalms, because they have a mix'd Congregation with which they cannot join in singing?

M. So if there were an express Command for Baptizing Children, they might find the like excuse, for not Baptizing theirs; because it must be done in a mix'd Congregation; they do not like the Minister, or People, or Form of Baptism, and therefore will keep their Children from it; but these are ridiculous Excuses; and why then do they Pray in a mix'd Congregation?

P. I cannot imagine what they will say to this, or what reason they can give, that they seldom use the Lord's Prayer, in any of their Meetings?

M. I guess at the reason of both, but I will not be positive therein, because I will not be Uncharitable (as they are) it may be, 'tis because they hate all Forms of Words in the Worship of God, and therefore will not sing Psalms, nor use the Lord's Prayer, lest they shou'd symbolize with us, and stand self Condemn'd for going so far, and not going farther in joining with us in that Excellent Form of Prayer our Church prescribes.

P. Truly this may be the reason they do not sing Psalms, nor use the Lord's Prayer; and I shall think it is, till they shew a better. But they Object many places of Scripture against Infant-baptism, even all those that require the Ministers to *Teach and Baptize*, Mat. 28. 19. and the People to *Believe, and be Baptiz'd*, Mar. 16. 16. and *To repent, and be Baptiz'd*, Acts 2. 38. And with these, they stagger Ignorant and Unstable Souls, and sometimes gain them to their Party.

M. What you say, is very true; but there is no reason any one shou'd be stagger'd with these Texts; for they all have respect to grown Persons, that were then Believers, or shou'd become; and do not at all concern their Children.

P. But how do you prove that Children are not excluded from Baptism by these Texts?



*M.* From one of them, that of *Mar. 16. 16. He that Believeth, and is Baptiz'd, shall be sav'd; but he that believeth not, shall be damn'd.* Where (he that Believeth not, shall be Damn'd) is acknowledged by our Opposers in this Point, to be restrain'd to grown Persons only, and that Children are not intended by it; whom they will neither allow to have Faith, nor yet to be Damn'd for want of it: And therefore (he that Believeth, and is Baptiz'd, in the former part of the Verse) must be so restrain'd too, and understood of grown Persons, and not of Children; and so Children are no more to be kept from Baptism, than from Heaven, for want of Faith. And therefore when they object such Scriptures as these to you, answer them, with some other, as, *Heb. 5. 9. Christ became the Author of Salvation, to all them that obey him.* *Luke. 13. 5. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.* And the place just before quoted, *He that believeth not, shall be damn'd;* and *Heb. 11. 6. Without Faith, it is impossible to please God;* and *Rev. 21. 8. But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, &c. shall have their part in the Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death:* And tell them 'tis as plain, from these Texts, that Children cannot be Sav'd without Faith, as from the other Scriptures, that they ought not to be Baptiz'd without it. And tell them too, tho' Baptism be but one, there is a twofold way of applying it.

1. Through Confession of Faith, to such grown Persons, as are capable of making it; and so the objected Scriptures mean it.
2. Without the Confession of Faith, in them who are not able to make it, is Baptism apply'd to Believers Children; and 'tis absurd in any one to urge that against Children, to shut them out from Baptism, which only concerns Men.

*P.* This kind of Reasoning, I believe will be too hard for them; but it would leave them without excuse, if you cou'd produce a plainer Text or two for Infant-baptism.

*M.* I think, they are left without Excuse in what has been already urg'd, and if I cou'd yet produce plainer Texts, they wou'd do but little good upon them.

*P.* You know not but through the blessing of God they may, and therefore if you have any more, pray let me hear them.

*M.* Why

M. Why then, urge those two places wherein Believers Children are called *Disciples* and *Believers*, as *Acts* 15. 10. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the *Disciples*, which neither our fathers, nor we were able to bear? Which was the Yoke of Circumcision, and that was chiefly born by Children, who were to undergo it at eight Days Old, and *Mat.* 18. 6. But whoso shall offend one of those little ones that believe in me, it were better that a Millstone were hanged about his neck, and he drowned in the depth of the Sea. Where by little ones, Christ means little Children, as is plain, from the four preceeding Verses; in every one of which he expresses little Children, or the little Child he had set in the midst of his *Disciples*.

P. But what say you to their evasions to these Texts? To *Acts* 15. 10. \* they say, the putting the Yoke of Circumcision, is not actual Circumcision in the Flesh; for that the *Jews* as well as their Children, were able to bear for many Ages; but the Yoke of Circumcision, is the necessity of it upon Mens Consciences in order to Salvation.

\* Mr. K.  
Gold re-  
fin'd, p. 39.

M. But this is a meer shift, and Confuted by one of their own Party, \* who says, *St. Peter here speaks of Circumcision, not as the false Teachers wou'd then have brought it in (which certainly was to impose it on the Consciences of Christians, as if they cou'd not be Sav'd without it) but as it was consider'd simply in it self, as that he calls it a Yoke upon their Fathers not to be born; who liv'd before those false Teachers were.* And 'tis a weak Reason of the former's Opinion, to say, that the *Jews* and their Children bore Circumcision for many Ages; and the Apostle says, this is a Yoke which neither cou'd bear; for who can be ignorant, that by this Phrase, is meant only the difficulty wherewith the *Jews* bore Circumcision, that they cou'd hardly endure it, it being frequently said in Scripture, that a Man cannot do that, which is hard for him to do, as *Mark* 1. 45. *Luke* 11. 7. and so the meaning can be no other, than that neither the *Jews* nor their Children were well able to bear the Yoke of Circumcision.

\* Mr. Black-  
wood's  
storming  
of Anti-  
christ, pag.  
37.

P. This is clear: But what say you to the answer they commonly give to *Mat.* 18. 6. That by *little ones* Christ means such as are little in Faith, and their own Judgment.

M. They;

**M.** They may say what they please, but they can never prove this to be Christ's meaning; and I dare engage, that if any unprejudic'd Person, reads from the first Verse of this Chapter to this sixth, and considers that all along, in every Verse, Christ has a particular regard to little Children; and to the little Child that was before him, he can never imagine Christ wou'd break off so abruptly, as to mean by little ones, Men and Women that were little in Faith; but will rather conclude, that by little ones Christ meant such little Children he had been speaking of before in every part of this Discourse; but the truth is, these two Texts especially press so hard upon them, that I do not wonder to see them wrench and turn, and distinguish, to avoid the force of them, which with all their Art and Subtily they are never able to do; for if Believers Children are Disciples and Believers, (as Christ and the Holy Ghost assures us, who best knew their Hearts) then by their own confession they may and ought to be Baptiz'd.

**P.** I am satisfied, and to Dispute (as many of them do) that Children cannot be Disciples nor Believers, against such plain Texts of Scripture which affirm them to be both, is really to fight against God. But there is one Objection behind, with which they flourish and sometime gravel unlearn'd and wavering People, *viz.* That Christ was not Baptiz'd till he was a Man (as most conjecture) about Thirty Years of Age, and how dare we Baptize Children when they are not Thirty, nor Three Days Old? We shou'd rather defer their Baptism after Christ's Example, till they are Men, and can give an account of their Faith.

**M.** This Argument proves nothing, because it proves too much; for then no one must be Baptiz'd till he is about the same Age of Thirty, as Christ was, nor in any River but *Jordan*. And no one must receive the Lord's Supper above once, and that at the point of Death, and then with Men only, because therein lie has Christ's Example for his Pattern; but if they themselves do not follow Christ in all imitable things, why do they press us to follow him in this, of deferring Baptism till Manhood? The truth is, Scripture Examples whether of Christ or his Apostles conclude nothing, unless the very same reasons and circumstances concur to in-

inforce our imitation; and that they do not in the case before us; for Christ did not defer his Baptism till Manhood, because he cou'd not sooner give an account of his Faith, who at Twelve Years Old was able to baffle and confound all the Doctors in *Jerusalem*, *Luk. 2. 47.* but he deferr'd it in all likelyhood, because he did not sooner enter upon his Ministerial Office: And he then receiv'd it, not because he needed it; but to fulfill all Righteousness, and to Consecrate this Christian Ordinance, before he began to Preach the Christian Religion to the World; or else Christ receiv'd Baptism no sooner, because *John Baptist* who was to perform that Office began no sooner to Baptize; for 'tis as evident from Scripture, that *John Baptist* did not Baptize his Profelytes till Christ was about Thirty Years of Age, as that Christ was so Old before he was Baptiz'd, *Luke 3. 21, 22, 23.* And if it is suggested, that notwithstanding the Evangelist's relation of these things as if done near together, they might have happen'd at some distance of time from one another; then I say, for the same reason, Christ might have been Baptiz'd long before he was Thirty, even in Infancy; at least so soon as he cou'd speak and go; and their urging of Christ's Example does rather conclude for, than against the Baptism of our Children.

P. So it does; and now I should have done, but that I must beg the Favour of you to resolve me Three Queries more fully, which in effect you have answered already; not as if I doubted my self, but that I may be able to satisfie others; and I shall trespass no longer upon your patience.

M. I shall chearfully comply with you, and am never tired to serve you or any Man else on so good account, and therefore pray proceed to your Queries.

P. The First is, Whether you judge Baptism, which is Administered to Believers Children in Infancy, to be Lawful and good Baptism?

M. Yes, Certainly it is, and you have no reason to doubt of it; not only because I prov'd before from Scripture that Baptism comes in the room of Circumcision; that the *Israelites* passage through the Red Sea was a Type thereof, that Children are Holy, and shall be happy; For of such is the Kingdom of Heaven,



*Heaven*, and that the Promise is to their Children as well as to the believing Parents; but also because the Covenant God made with our Father *Abraham* is the very same in substance with that he has made with us Christians, being a Covenant of Faith in Christ, and obtaining Salvation by it; and therefore Circumcision was not only a Seal of *Abraham's* Faith in particular, but also a Seal of the *Jews* Faith, which descended from him, and of the *Gentile* Profelytes Faith, who imbrac'd the Jewish Religion, and were adopted into the Jewish Nation, as is clear from *Gen.* 17. from the 7th to the 15th Verse; *Rom.* 4. 11. and several other places of Scripture; and the Abrahamicall Covenant being the same for substance with that which is made with Believers now, even a Covenant of Faith; and the Seal thereof being only chang'd, Circumcision into Baptism; because Almighty God admitted Children into Covenant then, and by no one Precept or Example has since excluded them from it, Children are still in Covenant with him; for being once in Covenant, the same Everlasting Covenant, Children are ever in it, unless it can be shew'd when, or where they are shut out of it; and so our Children ought to be Baptiz'd, as the Jewish Children were of Old Circumcis'd; the Consequence of which is, that the Baptism of the Christian is as valid as the Circumcision of the Jewish Children.

\*Mr. Blackwood  
storming  
of Anti-  
christ,  
p. 32.

P. This is close reasoning: But these \* Men object here, that Circumcision was no Seal of Faith to the *Jews*, because it was Administred to the Reprobates as well as to the Elect; *Esau* and *Ismael* were Circumcis'd (whom they look on to be finally rejected) as well as *Isaac* and *Jacob*, who were effectually call'd.

M. To this I answer, 1. I might as well argue that Baptism is no Seal of Grace, because it was administred to *Simon Magus*, whose final condition the Scripture sets forth to be as dangerous at least as *Ismael's* or *Esau's*; *St. Peter* says of him, that he was in the gulf of bitterness and bond of iniquity, and leaves it mighty doubtful whether he was ever forgiven or no, *Acts* 8. 22, 23. and yet the objector himself allows Baptism to be a Sign or Seal of Grace already wrought, and of Grace farther to be wrought.

Ibid. page  
58, 59.



wrought; and so he confutes himself with his own Answer, and in effect owns, that Circumcision as well as Baptism might be a Seal of Grace, notwithstanding its being Administred to such bad Men as *Esau*, *Ishmael*, and *Simon Magus*. 2. How does it appear that *Esau* and *Ishmael* never had Faith? they might have it, and fall from it; unless they can prove this to be impossible. 3. How does it appear that *Esau* and *Ishmael* were Reprobates and finally rejected? As to the latter, tho' he had not the Birth-right and Priesthood which belong'd to it; yet *Abraham* Pray'd for him, no doubt for his Eternal as well as Temporal Welfare, *Gen. 17. 18. O that Ishmael might live before thee.* And God answered his Prayers, *ver. 20. As for Ishmael I have heard thee.* And as to the former, tho' *Esau* be call'd Profane, yer that was for undervaluing his Birth-right to which the Priesthood was annex'd, as is evident from *Heb. 12. 16. If it be said, he found no place of Repentance*, that was of his Father *Isaac's* Repentance, in changing his mind, and recalling the Blessing he had first given *Jacob*; *Esau* found no place of such Repentance in his Father, tho' he might of his own Repentance; for he might Repent, and there is nothing in this place to prove the contrary, it having respect only to his Father *Isaac's* Blessing, as the former part of the Verse does plainly shew (*For ye know that afterwards when he wou'd have inherited the blessing, he was rejected*) But by whom was this? by his Father *Isaac*, *Gen. 27. 33. I have blessed him, i. e. Jacob, yea, and he shall be blessed:* Upon which *Esau* cryed with an exceeding great and bitter cry, *Ver. 34. but to no purpose*, he cou'd not alter his Father's mind, and so he found no place for [*Isaac's*] repentance, tho' he sought it carefully with tears: And for that other place of *St. Paul*, *Rom. 9. 13. Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated:* It may be understood, 1. Comparatively, that God lov'd the one less than the other; a lesser degree of Love being in Scripture call'd Hatred, as *Luke 14. 26. If any man come unto me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife and Children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life, he cannot be my Disciple;* all which Relations, especially a Man's own dear self, 'tis not only Natural, but God has Commanded us to Love; and yet if we do not Hate all these we cannot be Christ's Disciples;

the meaning of which seemingly harsh passage is only this; that we must Love our nearest Kindred and Selves less than Christ, or else he will not own us for his Disciples at the last Day; and in this sense God might Love *Esau* too, tho' he lov'd *Jacob* more. Or 2. God's Hatred to *Esau* may be understood in respect of Temporal Blessings; that *Jacob* enjoy'd a greater share of them than *Esau* did, and so the Prophet *Malachi*, whence *St. Paul* had it, expounds this place, *Mal. 1. 2. Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau;* and wherein that Hatred consisted, it immediately follows, *I laid his mountains and heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness;* i.e. *Esau's* Possessions were more Barren and Unfruitful than *Jacob's*, which was a Temporal Curse laid upon him for despising his Birth-right and the Priesthood, that went along with it; so that *Esau* and *Ismael* might be Gracious and Elect Children for any thing that can be prov'd from Scripture to the contrary, and then Circumcision might be a Seal of Grace and Faith to them as well as to other Believing Jews.

P. I am glad you have Explain'd these Scriptures to me, which my self as well as many others have always apply'd to Election and Reprobation; tho' I now find we had no reason for doing it. But have you any other Reason for proving Baptism administr'd to Believers Children in Infancy, to be Lawful and sufficient?

M. Yes, several, but I shall name but one more, that I may not be too tedious to you.

P. I shall never think so, and therefore pray let me hear your other Reason.

M. It is because the Parents or Friends Faith has procur'd the Children some Spiritual as well as Temporal Benefits from Christ; and therefore why may it not procure for them the benefit of Christian Baptism? And if it be regularly obtain'd it must be valid.

P. But how do you prove that the Parents Faith has procured Temporal and Spiritual Advantages for Children?

M. The Temporal are to be seen in those Miraculous Cures Christ wrought on their Bodies, particularly, *Luk. 8. 50. Believe only, thou that art her Father, and she, that is, thy Daughter, shall*

*shall be made whole.* The Spiritual Cures may be found, if you consult those places where Christ cast out Devils of Children; particularly, *Mat. 15. 27, 28.* where he deliver'd the Woman of *Canaan's* Daughter from the Power and Possession of Satan, for the sake of her Mother's Faith; and that was a Spiritual Blessing indeed. And the like Cures did Christ work for the sake of the Friends as well as Parents Faith; particularly, the Centurion's Faith was the Motive that induc'd Christ to recover his Servant that lay Sick of the Palsie, grievously tormented; *Go thy way* (says Christ to the Centurion) *as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee: and his servant was healed in the self same hour, Mat. 8. 6, 13.* Which by the way is a good Argument, why the Faith of others, even God-fathers and God-mothers as well as the Parents, may be available for obtaining this Spiritual Privilege of bringing Children to Baptism, if they had no Faith of their own; especially when God's Promise imbraces them as well as grown Believers. I do not mention this as a thing of absolute necessity, but only as highly reasonable that our Church shou'd require Sureties to make an open Profession of the Christian Faith, and to promise to see the Baptiz'd Child Educated in it, for fear the Parents through negligence or Death, shou'd fail to perform their Duty to him; as no Man wou'd Lend a considerable Sum of Money, but he would have one or more Sureties to be Bound with the Principal, for the surer Payment of the Debt. And truly what is the Consequence of despising the Faith of God-fathers and God-mothers? Why Men come next to despise the Parents Faith, and will not Baptize the Child till he has actual Faith of his own, and does publickly Profess it; and from that, they come to despise the very Ordinance of Baptism, and to say, if we have Faith, there is no need of being Baptiz'd; and so from Contemning the Orders of our Church, they proceed at last so far as to juggle the Ordinance it self out of Door.

P. I see there is no stop when Men forsake our Church; and therefore I shall stick close to it; only I wish, that what our God-fathers and God-mothers thus Charitably undertake, they wou'd be careful according to their Power Conscientiously to perform. But I hasten to my second Query, Whether Baptism

Administred by Sprinkling or Pouring Water on the Face, be a good Baptism?

P. Yes, certainly it is; and that for these Four Reasons,

1. Not only because the Word [Baptize] is used in Scripture for Sprinkling and Washing some part of the Body, as well as for Dipping the whole in Water; as I have already prov'd. But 2. Because the Vertue of the Ordinance of Baptism does not depend upon the quantity of Water any more than that of the Lords Supper depends upon the quantity of Bread and Wine receiv'd in it; a little of each Element makes either Ordinance as valid as a great deal. 3. Because if Baptism by Sprinkling, or which the Opposers of it count all one, by Dipping in Infancy be no Baptism, then are not any of them Baptiz'd; since they receiv'd their Baptism at first from some one of us that was either Sprinkled or Dipp'd in Infancy; and therefore they shou'd take heed how they make void our Baptism, lest thereby they destroy their own, and prove themselves to be no Christians, as they uncharitably esteem us. 4. Because they themselves do not put the whole Body of the Baptiz'd Person under Water, but he himself puts the one half at least under Water by wading into it, and the Dipper puts the other; and if their Baptism be Administred by casting the upper part of the Body under the Water, Why may not we Administer Baptism by Pouring Water on the Face or Sprinkling it? And why may not our Baptism thus Administred be as good as theirs?

P. I see no Reason but it is, and much better. But I proceed to my Third and last Query; Whether Believers Children that are Baptiz'd in Infancy, ought to be Baptiz'd again? because we have some among us that are fallen into Scruples about it.

M. Let the Doubters be never so many, this must not be done, by no means; For as there is but one Lord, and one Faith, so there is but one Baptism, Eph. 4. 5. And having receiv'd that one Baptism, 'tis dangerous for you to mock God in the repeating of it; this is in effect to Condemn the Generation of God's Children, to declare your selves to have been hitherto meer Heathens, and to deny that Faith into which ye have been Baptiz'd. Nevertheless the Foundation of God standeth sure, having this Seal, which ought

not



not to be set twice to the same Covenant; but yet this Baptism when they come of Age to give an Account of their Faith, they may and ought to Ratify by Episcopal Confirmation; and so by taking their Baptismal Vow upon themselves, your Children at last shou'd make it their own Act and Deed: And this is no Superstitious Ceremony, but grounded on the Apostles Practice, and plain Testimony of Scripture, as *Acts* 8. 14, 15, 16, 17. where we find, that after the whole Country of *Samaria* was Converged by the Preaching of *Philip*, and had received Baptism at his Hands, the Apostles sent *St. Peter* and *John* thither to Confirm them, which they needed not to have done, if *Philip* (who was one of the Seven Deacons mention'd *Acts* 6. 5.) cou'd have Confirm'd as well as he had Baptiz'd them; but that being a Work peculiar to the Apostles and their Successors the Bishops of the Church, two of that Sacred Order were Delegated on purpose for the doing of it; and a Work 'tis, that is needful to be done, not only to ratifie our Baptism, and make it our own voluntary Fact, but also to receive a greater degree of the ordinary and Saving Graces of the Holy Ghost, now that the extraordinary and Miraculous Gifts are long since ceased; for which reason the Author to the *Hebrews* reckons Confirmation among the Principles of the Doctrin of Christ, and places it next to Baptism, as a thing which in the course of the Gospel Dispensation ought next to follow it, *Heb.* 6. 2. where in the Foundation of the Christian Religion the Apostle sets Baptism, and after that laying on of Hands, which is Confirmation; and \* *Mr. Calvin* himself was so far from Condemning the right use of this Ceremony as Superstitious, that he wishes it were Restored and Practised in all Churches as it was in the Primitive Times (and then I am sure the Practice of it cannot be condemned in our Church) And he proves at large the Reasonableness and Benefits thereof by way of Preparation for the Lord's Supper; and to *Mr. Calvin's* wish I shall add mine. That Confirmation were as duly and conscientiously perform'd by all Bishops in ours, as it was by the Apostles in their Days; and that we Ministers wou'd every one of us prepare the Youth of our respective Parishes by Catechistical Instruction; and that our People wou'd take care to present them to the Bishop, for this Apostolical Benediction.

\* *Calvin's*  
*Instit.* lib.  
 4. cap. 19.  
 Sect. 4. &c.  
 13. de  
*Confir.*

P. I am glad to find this prov'd by Scripture, and shall not fight Episcopall Confirmation any more, but if I had never so many Children, wou'd bring them all (as soon as they are capable) to be Confirm'd by the Bishop, to receive the benefit of his Blessing and Prayers.

M. I wish all other Parents were of your mind, and from Confirmation would bring their Sons and Daughters to the Lord's Supper, and by their good Example and Perswasions prevail with them to continue the constant and devout use of that Holy Sacrament, as often as they have an opportunity of receiving it, and then I dare say, there wou'd not be so much Division and Wickedness as there is in the World.

P. I cannot tell what others will do, but *Joshua's* Resolution shall be mine, *As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord,* Jos. 24. 15.

M. 'Tis bravely resolv'd, and I pray God to give you the Grace to keep your good Resolution, that it may not vanish as the Morning Dew, or as the Cloud that passeth away.

P. Amen; But these People have more Objections to make, and more Answers to return to ours, which I cannot think of, and Ignorant Persons are sometimes surpriz'd and confounded with them, and therefore I long to see that larger Treatise you mention'd.

M. If you never see it, as you may not (this being a dull Age for Printing) there are many Excellent Discourses on this Subject already Published, and that will not be found wanting, especially since you have an Abridgment of it in this Conference; which perhaps will spoil the Sail of the other.

P. I hope not, and wou'd have you encourag'd, because your Reasoning is plain, and your Arguments so worded, that the meanest Capacity may understand them.

M. I confess next to God's Glory that is my great design, the Edification of all People; and those Authors that do not aim at this, lose their labour in Writing, as the Common People do their time in Reading their Books. But enough of this, lest I shou'd be justly thought too conceited and contentious.

P. I am to the Bishop, for this Apollonical Benediction.

P. I believe you speak the Truth after your wanted manner, let who will be offended with it; and therefore pray give me a little Advice at parting how I shall behave my self in reference to those Men we have been all along discoursing of.

M. Why, take heed that you do not hear them, that you be not present at any of their Dippings: they will very few of them, and they very seldom come to our Sermons, but none of them to our Church's Prayers or Baptism, and think it unlawful to be present at the two last; I am sure 'tis more unlawful for us to frequent any of their Assemblies, and very fit we should hearken to St. Paul's Counsel, and receive it into our Hearts as well as Ears, *Rom. 16. 17. Now I beseech you, Brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to sound doctrine, which ye have learned; (and I may add wherein too you have been Baptiz'd) and avoid them.* And I might use many Arguments to this purpose, yet shall content my self with one, that they esteem the Church of *England* no true Christian Church, nor any other Church to be so, that has been or now is in the World, excepting only their own; and if you had no other reason, methinks you should not venture into their Assemblies, nor be of their Perswasion, nor think them the only Church and People of God, because of this their prodigious uncharitableness to all other Christians.

P. This is Reason enough not to be of their Religion who want Charity, which is such an essential part of it; and therefore as I never was at any of their Meetings, so I hope I never shall, believing my self safe in the Communion of this Orthodox Church of *England*, as to the eternal Welfare of my Soul.

M. And so no doubt but you are; and finding you so well satisfied, I presume you have no more Queries to propose, no further Scruples that may trouble you, and shall therefore take my leave of you at this time with those two excellent Petitions of our Litany; *From all blindness of heart, from pride vain-glory and hypocrisie, from envy hatred and malice, and all uncharitableness; M. and P. Good Lord deliver us; From all sedition, privy conspiracy and rebellion, from all false doctrine heresie and schism,*

[illegible]

1. This is a letter from the Rev. Mr. [Name] to the Rev. Mr. [Name]. It is dated [Date] and is written from [Location]. The letter is addressed to the Rev. Mr. [Name] at [Address]. The letter is written in a friendly and confidential manner. It contains a great deal of interesting information about the state of the church and the world. It is a very valuable document and should be carefully preserved.



